

**Our Lady of Prompt Succor Nursing Facility**  
**C'est la Vie Apartments**  
**Newsletter – April 2020**  
**Ministry of the Marianites of Holy Cross**

**Good Friday to Easter Sunday**

As Easter approaches this year, we are most probably dealing with a truck load of emotions ranging from mild to moderate anxiety resulting from fear of the unknown and concerns for the future. We wonder where to turn for effective assistance and we may find ourselves in the experience of Good Friday with Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane calling out to his heavenly Father for help (Mt. 26:36; Mk 14:39). Like Jesus, we, too, can call to our heavenly Father for help. When we do so, we are bound more powerfully to God through our needs and weaknesses, our unfulfilled hopes and dreams, and our anxieties and problems than we ever could have been through our joys, successes, and strengths alone.[1]

In fact it is at times when life is turned upside down that our prayer is most authentic because we don't have a back-up plan if God does not answer us as we expect or desire. So how might we best deal with the anxiety and concern trying to capture our hearts, minds, and spirits. Brien D. McLaren offers us some words of wisdom that seem most appropriate at this time. He explains that anxieties can gray the whole sky of our lives like cloud cover or descend on our whole horizon like fog. To assist us with our anxieties, he recommends that we, first, name them, make them concrete. The anxiety that covered our whole sky can now be contained in a couple of buckets. He explains that when we are suffering from anxiety, our prayer can assist us by simply holding the word **help** before God, letting that one word bring focus to the chaos of our racing thoughts. Once we feel that our mind has dropped out of the frantic zone and into a spirit of connection with God, we can let go of the general word **help** and in its place hold more specific words that name what we truly need, thereby condensing the cloud of vague anxiety into a bucket of prayer requests. So we might hold the word **guidance** before God or the word **patience, courage, mercy, compassion, calm, freedom, wisdom, peace, etc.**[2]

McLaren suggests that along with our anxieties and hurts, we can also bring our disappointments to God. If anxieties focus on what might happen, and hurts focus on what has happened, disappointments focus on what has not happened. Revealing our feeling is the beginning of healing, so simply acknowledging or naming our disappointment to God is an essential step. This is especially important because many of us, if we don't bring our disappointment to God, will blame our disappointment on God, thus alienating ourselves from the One who is our best hope of comfort and strength in all times.

Therefore, whether we are dealing with anxieties, wounds, disappointments, or other needs or struggles, there is enormous power in simple, strong words – the words by which we name our pain and then translate it into a request to God. Through this practice of prayer, we discover something priceless: the **sacred connection to God** that grows stronger through our anxieties, wounds, disappointments, struggles, and needs. The Compassionate God is our gracious friend, and we don't have to earn anything, deserve anything, achieve anything, or merit anything to bring our needs to God. We can just come as we are and be ourselves in His presence and His promise of Easter life.[3]

[1] Brian D. McLaren, *Naked Spirituality* (Harper One: 2011), page 104; [2] pages 116–117; [3] pages 119–120.

**“Love is stronger than death.”**  
**(Song of Songs 8:6).**

### **Dare to be...**

As we face today's challenging circumstances, we tend to become very focused on the challenges which confront us. These circumstances begin to shape our thinking, our responses, our decisions, our relationships. The result of our fixation might be thought patterns that are not congruent with our best selves and our relationship with God. In the midst of navigating these uncharted waters, we offer these suggestions for reflection and prayer:

**Dare to be a person of joy** – “Rejoice in the Lord always, again I say rejoice!” (Phil.4:4) The word “always” is key in this passage. Circumstances do not determine our joy; we can choose to be joy-filled in all moments. Joy is a lasting inward experience that is not affected by the storms of life. Joy lifts spirits and casts away demons of anxiety and depression. In Jesus' final moments with his disciples, he reminded them and now us: “You will have tribulation in this world, but be joyful for I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33)

**Dare to be a person of praise** – “I will bless the Lord at ALL times. His praise is ever on my lips.” (Psalm 34:1) Our natural tendency is to praise God only when things are going well. We live in a world of great oppression where God is often pushed to the margins. However, to praise God is to become who we really are, since we were created to live for the praise of God's glory (Eph 1:12). To praise God is to break through that worldly oppression, to realize how awesome God is and become awakened and alive to His love for us in all times and seasons!

**Dare to be a person of hope** – “Even though I walk through the dark valley, I fear no evil, for You are at my side. With Your rod and staff, You give me comfort.” (Psalm 23) Fear is the enemy of hope. It smears hope with doubt. We enthusiastically experience God on the mountain top but quickly doubt in the valleys. However, God is even nearer to us in the dark valleys, in the cliffs and crevices of life that cause us to feel lost and alone. Call upon the Good Shepherd to lift you up, put you on his shoulders, and wrap you around his neck. Allow yourself to feel hope rising in your heart as you let go and allow him to carry you in His loving embrace.

**Dare to be a person of gratitude** – “Give thanks to the Lord for He is good; his loving mercy endures forever.” (Psalm 136:1) God's presence is most visible to us in this time of crisis in our health care workers and all those serving us in countless ways. With hearts filled with gratitude we pray for them: *Loving God, we ask your blessings upon all those who are putting themselves at risk to care for us and the sick of our world. Ease their fears and fill them with your strength and courage. Keep them and their families safe and in good health. Bless the sacred work of their hands and assure them of our unending gratitude.*

**These times call for our daring response**, especially when we are tempted to respond with doubt, fear, sadness, anger, frustration. Demons rise up in the midst of the community and threaten to lead the group astray. We have to stand fast and be true to who we are called to be as members of the Body of Christ. We have to dare to find joy in the face of sorrow, to hope in the face of doubt and fear, to be grateful for what was, what is, what will be. While practicing physical distancing, we can rejoice in social outreach and be very kind and compassionate toward one another. The choice is ours and it will determine not only our personal well-being but the health and well-being of the community and the world. *“I set before you this day life and death, the blessing and the curse. Choose life, then, that you and your descendants may live, by loving the Lord, your God, heeding His voice, and holding fast to Him”* (Deuteronomy 30:19).

☐ **Celebrating Birthdays in April** ☐

Sr. M. P. Blanchard	4/15	Sr. N. Duhe	4/01	J. Molter	4/09
Br. P. Casey	4/11	A. Fruge	4/17	L. Pitre	4/18
Sr. M. E. Demeo	4/02	R. Manuel	4/03	S. Reed	4/20
E. V. Deshotel	4/14	Sr. R. Mier	4/28	A. Savoie	4/30
T. De Marcay	4/22			U. Wyble	4/19

— **Recently Deceased Residents** —

Anna Janise	3/08/2020
James Bertrand	3/12/2020
Leanna Theriot	3/23/2020



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